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letters and conversations, which show more vividly than the most brilliant article can do the part that Sterne played in the intellectual life of his great admirer. From 1771 when Goethe, fresh from Strassburg and his friendship with Herder, advises Jung Stilling to read Sterne, to 1830, when he last mentions him in a letter to Marianne von Willemer, we find him constantly rereading, quoting and commenting upon the works of Sterne, always with a deep sympathy for the man, a keen enjoyment of his ideas and of his humor and a grateful realization of what the men of his generation and especially he himself owe to the great British humorist. We have not time to trace in detail the influence of Sterne on Goethe in his sentimental period and in his recovery from it, in his style and his preference for certain words and phrases, in his ever-growing sense of the value of personality as at once the greatest force and the greatest happiness in life. All this and much more can be learned from this little book. But we cannot close without quoting the words in which Goethe himself, almost at the end of his long life, sums up his final judgment of Sterne. In 1826 he writes of him as the man "der die grosse Epoche reinerer Menschenkenntniss, edler Duldung, zarter Liebe in der ersten Hälfte des vorigen Jahrhunderts zuerst angeregt und verbreitet hat." Two years later he says: "Yorick-Sterne war der schönste Geist, der je gewirkt hat; wer ihn liest, fühlt sich sogleich frei und schön; sein Humor ist unnachahmlich, und nicht jeder Humor befreit die Seele." Again: "(Ich) bewunderte aber- und abermal die Freiheit, zu der sich Sterne zu seiner Zeit emporgehoben hat, begriff auch seine Einwirkung auf unsere Jugend. Er war der erste, der sich und uns aus Pedanterei und Philisterei emporhob." "Er ist in nichts ein Muster, in allem ein Andeuter und Erwecker."

*Vassar College*

M. P. WHITNEY

*FIRST ITALIAN BOOK.* (The University of Chicago Italian Series.) BY E. H. WILKINS, Ph.D., Litt.D. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. XIV+164 pp. 16 mo.

"A student takes up the study of a modern foreign language with one or more of these five purposes: to acquire a knowledge of the grammar of that language; to enable himself to understand that language as written; to enable himself to understand that language as spoken; to enable himself to speak that language; to enable himself to write that language."

"It is my firm belief that in the teaching of a modern foreign language to students who have passed the age of childhood the first several weeks should be devoted exclusively and intensively to enabling them to acquire a good understanding of that language as written and spoken; and that the study of the grammar as such,

and the endeavor to train students to speak and write the language, should be postponed until a good understanding of the language as written and spoken has been attained."

These are the two first paragraphs of the *Preface*. Professor Wilkins has come to the conclusions in the second, not only from considering that a reading knowledge is what is most desired by most students, but chiefly because he believes that the best and easiest way to acquire a writing and speaking knowledge (for persons other than children) is to acquire first a reading and hearing knowledge. And so the exercises in this *First Book* contain no sentences to be translated into Italian, and all the instruction is newly conceived with the purpose of teaching to read and hear, not to write and speak.

Experienced teachers of first year classes, who have so often been saddened by examination papers in which the translation into English and the answers to grammar questions were fair, but the translation into the foreign language pitifully bad, will be inclined to agree with Mr. Wilkins. Hope springs eternal—but year after year brings the same disappointment: the papers of even those students who have a natural talent for languages always show a marked inferiority in writing in the language.

'Of course!—will come the reply,—to write in the language is more difficult than to read it; one must expect that the more difficult task will be less successfully performed than the easier. But if you teach your pupil to write from the beginning, he will learn to read without difficulty; whereas if you at first teach him only to read, he may never learn to write. And similarly, if you lose no time in teaching him to speak the language, his ear will become accustomed to the sounds at the same time. Reading and writing, hearing and speaking, ought all to begin at the same time and proceed together.'

To this argument our author has a double answer, theoretical and practical. He says (p. vi) "It is natural, in preparation for intellectual creative work in any field, that a period of observation and absorption should precede creative activity. Composition, written or oral, as a feature of initial elementary instruction, takes a large share of the student's time and energy and leads to the commission of more errors, and consequently to the development of more discouragement and hostility than any other part of the work."

Let us refer the theory to the psychologist. As for us teachers, we have tried various methods of teaching to read and write, hear and speak simultaneously, and we know that even students who make progress continue indefinitely to give evidence that they have not learned to read accurately, and their memories of mistaken pronunciation struggle hardily with memories of corrections. The iniquities of the first year, committed by beginners who were

perhaps trying to learn too much at once, are visited on the third and fourth year, especially on those who hate 'composition': by all means let us try the new way.

The postponement of grammar is a more difficult question. Most people will agree that the language ought not to be presented to the beginners as a grammatical system to be mastered. This is no doubt what our author means by "the study of the grammar as such." But if one is learning a language one cannot help learning grammar any more than M. Jourdain could help writing prose, and nearly all our beginners in Italian have already a knowledge of the grammar of English and often of Latin and French or German. It helps them, I believe, and does not hinder, to be able to recognize that what they are learning is grammar, that the language is not an assemblage of disconnected forms, and to be able to classify the knowledge they are acquiring, as they go along. In some instances the author has somewhat grudgingly acknowledged this advantage. In these cases he has, as he tells us (p. viii) "included, in parentheses, paragraphs of explanatory material which coincide more or less with the traditional formulas, but these paragraphs are included merely for the temporary satisfaction of the curious student...."

The author has throughout followed a method of instruction that is consistently inductive. In each lesson the examples come first, and the explanation of them afterwards. The explanation gives the meaning of the forms in the examples; points out what they may be observed to have in common, and in what they differ; and gives them their grammatical names, with advice as to how to translate them in varying circumstances. Anything like a comprehensive rule, which would in one sentence account for the appearance of all the forms, is studiously avoided, except where the above-mentioned parenthetical paragraphs occur. The care with which examples and explanation have been prepared is beyond praise; this is the work of a conscientious teacher of genius who is ever watching the growth of knowledge in the pupil, and is attempting to feed him with information in the easiest possible way, and to make him think for himself at the same time. It must not be forgotten that this little book is only intended to be an introduction to the language: "the student must go on from this *First Book* to the study of a regular Italian Grammar, systematic in its marshalling of fact, and equipped with material for practice in speaking and in writing Italian." (p. ix.)

It seems to me nevertheless that the deductive method—which Mr. Wilkins evidently considers as proper to the full-fledged grammar—might have been generously blended with the inductive, to the advantage of the pupil who already has a grammatical habit of mind. Even rules that have been framed for teaching to write and speak are useful for those learning to read and hear. Why

should the pupil be forced to look in only one direction, like a young horse being trained in blinkers?

For example: In §104 we are introduced to *me, te, ce, ve*, and it is explained when they occur and that they are "equivalent" to *mi, ti, ci, vi* as indirect objects. Later, in §108, we come to *glie*, and in §116 to *se*. The pupil is left to guess that all these forms are connected, that *mi, ti, ci, vi, gli, si* have become *me, te, ce, ve, glie, se*, and that *le* has fallen in with *gli*. Again, in §104 it is noted that in translating *me lo presenta* "the English words must be arranged in an order exactly the reverse of the Italian order." This is to avoid giving the rule that the indirect object precedes the direct.

Another example: In §100 it is explained how abbreviated words ending in *l, m, n, r* may be completed. "They may in general be completed by the addition of *e* or *o*. A few forms ending in *l* are to be completed by the addition of *a, lo, or le*; a few ending in *n* by the addition of *i* or *no*; and a few ending in *r* by the addition of *a, i* or *re*." The mind of the pupil is left in doubt and confusion. How much simpler is the rule that all words ending in *l, m, n, r* plus vowel may drop the vowel "when closely connected in thought with the following word," and that if the consonant is double, one of the consonants is dropped also!

The student is carefully fed with information, gradually and with a view to his present needs. The yearning of the professional grammarian to exhaust the subject in hand before passing to the next is given no consideration whatever; no lesson provides more information than is needed at the stage which the pupil has reached. The mistake of presupposing knowledge that has not been imparted is never made. Each of the thirty-six lessons is divided into short sections, which deal with three or more separate subjects. In lessons I–VIII the first place is given to the explanation of the sounds, in IX–XVII to regular verbs with *essere* and *avere*, which, however, have already been partially presented in the preceding lessons; in XVIII–XXXVI irregular verbs take the first place. In the second, third and other places in each lesson room is found for all the rest of the information, which is also carefully graded and administered in homeopathic doses until the patient is ready for a strong dose that is hardly any larger than the others. Idiomatic expressions have their place too, and nothing is anywhere inserted because it must go *somewhere*.

Nearly a fourth of the space given to each lesson is occupied by exercises, which are often divided into many sections, and are anything but mere words and sentences to be translated. They are carefully constructed with regard to the lesson to which they belong, to test information. The sentences are rational and not pedantic, and they are in good modern Italian.

The lessons are followed by an admirably economical list of irregular verbs, contrived to be adequate for consultation without affording any satisfaction to those who have forgotten their regular verbs. Next comes a section of sound conservative rules for the pronunciation of *e*, *o*, *s*, and *z*; rules which have not been given before because that would not have been in harmony with the inductive method adopted to teach hearing rather than speaking; I wish they were at the beginning of the book. Last come a vocabulary and an index.

An excellent feature of the book is the simple but ingenious system of printing by which the stressed vowel in each word is indicated, and the quality, if it is *e* or *o*. Success depends on careful proof-reading, and there are surprisingly few misprints. These, I hear, are being registered for correction in the next edition.

The description of the sounds is good, but there is no mention of quantity in vowels; one would think that the stressed vowel before a double consonant were just as long as before a single one. *Ogni* (pp. 9 and 156) should have a close *o*, and *console* (p. 33) an open one. The statement that *zz* is no longer than *z* (p. 23), is doubtful, and at any rate cannot be verified by the naked ear. It seems a pity to use the unusual words, *ebro*, *ema*, *oddo* (pp. 25-6) even to exemplify sounds. The concise statement of §32 (p. 19) may be obscure at first sight. Perhaps it would be better to say: If the stem vowel of a verb is *e* or *o*, the sound may be open when stressed, although close when unstressed.

To say that "*fare* is a contraction of the obsolete *facere*" (p. 89) and *dire* of *dicere* (p. 95), and that one writes *studi*, *studiamo*, etc., with one *i* "in order to avoid bringing the sound *y* before a similar sound" (p. 37) is more convenient than truthful. The different forms of *bello* and *quello* (p. 38) might well be compared to *dello*, *del*, etc. "Usage in this matter is not fixed" (p. 39) leaves the impression that there is no difference in the use of *di* and *che* for 'than' in comparative sentences. The forms *temei-è-erono* (p. 41) are no longer in spoken usage, and the forms in use, *credetti-ette-ettero* (p. 56) should not be called "extra" forms. It seems more useful to translate *tu* as 'thou' than as 'you,' since 'thou' illustrates the use of *tu*. *Egli*, *lui*, *esso*, *ella*, *lei*, *essa*, should be distinguished (p. 86-7); the meaning 'it' should be given. *Ella* should be distinguished from *Lei* (pp. 92-3). "Mad" for 'angry' (p. 105) is not in good use. *Farla a una persona* (p. 105) means 'to play a trick on,' not "to get square with." *Dovrebbe* and *avrebbe dovuto* are not "the only tenses which can be translated with 'ought'" (p. 111); *deve* often means 'ought' in the sense 'it is his duty.' *Poteva parlare*, expressing possibility (p. 114), means 'he might have spoken,' not "he might speak." Another common idea expressed by *potere* is 'permission'—Eng. 'may,'

'might' (p. 115). 'I intend to speak' would be better than "I will to speak" (p. 115); another common meaning is 'to be going to,' as in *vuol piovere?* According to the last but one sentence of §184 (p. 123), one might expect an example such as 'La donna, trovata Giovanni che lavorava lì, gli diede il pacco.' The idiomatic *che* that introduces questions (p. 128) might be compared to French *est-ce que*. The *che* in the last two examples of §197 (pp. 129-130) might be compared to the illiterate English 'which' in "Ah Sin was his name, *which* I will not deny, with regard to the same, what that name might imply." This *che* is no doubt originally a relative pronoun. For "noun" in the last line of §198 (p. 130) we should read 'pronoun.' In §199 *ci avrebbe un fiammifero?* means 'Have you got a match?' i.e. 'Have you a match there?' whereas *avrebbe un fiammifero?* means "Have you a match?" This *ci* is the same *ci* that means *there* in 'ci sono stato.' So *Cosa c'è?* means "What is it?" because it means 'what is there?' *Se mi piace!* (p. 134) might be explained as elliptical; 'you ask me if I like it!' *Finchè* does not belong in §206 (p. 134). Its first meaning is 'as long as' e.g. *Finchè io viva*. Consequently *finchè non* means "until." Cf. p. 154. *Temono che non viva se rimane lì* (p. 135, sentence 6) will be translated 'They fear that he will live,' if the example of §206 is imitated.

With as few imperfections as ever qualified an original work of its kind, this little book promises to begin a new era in the history of instruction in Italian, and it may be expected to affect the teaching of other languages.

J. E. SHAW

University of Toronto

MANUEL TAMAYO Y BAUS, *UN DRAMA NUEVO*, edited with introduction, notes and vocabulary BY CLARENCE KING MOORE. Silver, Burdett and Co. 1920. VIII+113 pp.

Professor Moore has given in a very brief space the more important facts of the author's life, the text of the play, some notes and a vocabulary. Indeed one wonders whether the editor could not have expanded the notes and vocabulary to advantage. The notes are limited to helps on some grammatical constructions and on difficult passages. The contents of the notes for a text of this kind depend on the purposes and tastes of each editor. However, the inclusion of the explanation of a few more idioms would not have been out of place. Some examples may be given: page 2, note to line 3 might point out that *Con Dios se quede* is said to the person who remains, while *Vaya Vd. con Dios* is said to the one who leaves; page 11, line 14, should have a note on "Que Alicia no te debe el menor afecto," as the ordinary student will fail to get the